local calls and Service Providers are free to decide the pulse rate for different types of calls. Both Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited have not reduced the local call duration and have kept it as 180 seconds for local calls from landline to landline. However, taking into account the Interconnection Usage Charges (IUC), the pulse rate from landline to WLL (Mobile) has been kept as 90 seconds and Cellular mobile as 60 seconds.

Postal Facilities in Himachal Pradesh

†1713. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of Gram Panchayats in Himachal Pradesh are devoid of post offices;

(b) if so, the number thereof; and

(c) by when Government plan to set up post offices in these Gram Panchayats?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. There are 626 Gram Panchayats in Himachal Pradesh without Post Offices.

(c) Post Offices are opened subject to fulfillment of distance, population and income norms and availability of resources and targets under Plan. Hence no time limit can be specified for setting up post offices in these panchayats.

Telephones in Gram Sabhas

1714. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Gram Sabhas in the country where telephones are functioning and the number of Gram Sabhas which have applied for the telephones, State-wise;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.